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C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 003039

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/09/2013

TAGS: MOPS PREL EPET IZ KU

SUBJECT: GOK REQUESTS INCREASED SECURITY FOR FUEL SHIPMENTS
TO IRAQ

Classified By: Ambassador Richard H. Jones, reasons 1.5 (B) and (D).

¶1. (U) This is an action request. Please see paragraph 3.

¶2. (C) MFA U/S Khalid al-Jarallah contacted the Ambassador on the afternoon of July 9 at the request of Minister of Foreign Affairs Shaykh Sabah al-Sabah. According to al-Jarallah there is a continuing need for security for trucks carrying goods from Kuwait into Iraq, particularly those carrying fuel under contract to Kellogg, Brown and Root. He said that Shaykh Sabah had raised this issue recently with both NEA A/S Burns and UK FM Jack Straw and that each had assured him of their readiness to be of help on the issue. Unfortunately, although some security was being provided, it was still insufficient. Shaykh Sabah had asked him to reiterate the GOK request for increased security for the fuel trucks in particular. He termed this a "small but important" issue since the availability of fuel impacted on the daily lives of Iraqi civilians. The Ambassador noted that, unfortunately, he had not been present during Shaykh Sabah's discussions with A/S Burns, however he would relay this request at once to Washington and the Coalition Provisional Authority in Baghdad.

¶3. (C) Comment and Action request: We understand from KBR that its trucks do periodically receive small arms fire, even at locations relatively near to the IZ/KU border, and that one of their fuel-truck drivers was seriously wounded in late June. We have also heard reports of other incidents where trucks have been looted and drivers held for ransom. While we are not in a position to verify such accounts, we have no reason to believe that local interlocutors would intentionally try to exaggerate the security situation inside Iraq. In such an environment, a redoubling of efforts to protect shipments of materials important to the US to the extent that resources allow would seem to make good sense. Please advise on how we should respond to the GOK request.

¶4. (U) Minimize considered.
JONES